

# **Consultation on the revision of the Professional Development Award: Introduction to Tutoring in Adult Literacies Learning (PDA: ITALL) (G8GV 46)**

## **Introduction**

This consultation is about a review of the SQA qualification, PDA: ITALL<sup>1</sup>. For several years, and in different manifestations, this qualification has formed the backbone of professional development for adult literacies tutoring at the lower levels. Its value has been recognised as equipping candidates with the skills and knowledge they need to perform the tutor assistant role. Now it is proposed, for a number of reasons, that the qualification should be revised.

## **Factors driving the revision of the PDA:ITALL**

### Factor 1

**The qualification needs to fit within the context of the new Professional Development Framework for Scotland's Adult Literacies Workforce<sup>2</sup> (the "Framework"), and to articulate more clearly with other qualifications.**

During 2011/12, Education Scotland developed a professional development framework for the adult literacies workforce, on behalf of the Scottish Government. This Framework delineates three key roles in the delivery of adult literacies learning:

- the Tutor Assistant
- the Group Tutor and
- the Co-ordinator

For each role there is a set of typical competences, typical work tasks, guidance about appropriate qualifications and continuing professional development, and notes about how people might access each role, specialise and develop within them, and finally progress from them, if desired.

It became clear during consultations for the development of the Framework that the PDA: ITALL had often been used as the catch-all qualification for all adult literacies workers, regardless of the role they performed, when in fact it was originally designed for the Tutor Assistant role.

The group developing the Framework made a recommendation that SQA should revise the qualification as soon as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/25149.html>

<sup>2</sup> To be launched November 2012

## Factor 2

### **SQA's audit of the adult literacies workforce identified reasons to revise the qualification – and opportunities in so doing.**

As part of the development of the Framework (referred to in Factor 1 above), SQA carried out an audit of the qualification levels of the adult literacies workforce<sup>3</sup>. During focus groups, SQA noted that while the PDA: ITALL was widely welcomed, it was not always being targeted at the Tutor Assistant role, but often (as described in Factor 1 above) being used as a minimum qualification for anyone working in adult literacies. In addition, the audit identified a feeling that the qualification, if revised, should have more emphasis on practical learning.

## Factor 3

### **The qualification needs to articulate more clearly with the new PDA in Tutoring Adult Literacies<sup>4</sup> at SCQF Level 8 (GD5X 48) which was available from session 12/13**

This qualification, at SCQF level 8, contains a 0.75 SQA credit HN Unit (6 SCQF credit points) called Contexts of Adult Literacies (F8N8 35), which goes deeply into topics previously covered in the PDA: ITALL, namely: policy, priorities and principles, the social practice approach and educational guidance. There is now an opportunity to locate this learning largely within the SCQF level 8 PDA, with the emphasis of a revised PDA: ITALL more focused on the role of Tutor Assistant and development of practice within that role.

As well, the two 1.5 SQA credit HN Units at SCQF level 8 (12 SCQF credits) are heavily focused on teaching strategies. It is therefore proposed to remove some of the content on teaching strategies from the current PDA: ITALL. There will remain an overview of some key teaching strategies, such as language experience, and the teaching of key numeracy topics such as place value, but a broader range of teaching strategies will be explored deeply in the PDA: Tutoring Adult Literacies.

## Factor 4

### **There is a sense that the current qualification is too big.**

There is evidence that a few adult literacies partnerships around the country have developed their own, smaller training courses (some of which have been credit-rated) to replace the current PDA: ITALL. The main driver for creating alternative local training courses appears to be that the size of the current PDA (80 hours) is prohibitive.

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<sup>3</sup> Not published

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/48244.html>

## Factor 5

### **The qualification is due to be reviewed.**

The PDA: ITALL is now six years old and its review offers several opportunities. For example, there is an opportunity for amending the qualification to contain a Unit on raising awareness, that could be used as a stand-alone unit with external partners, such as workers in housing associations, libraries, healthcare and credit unions. There is also a chance to put more emphasis on the use of digital media, to promote digital literacy.